

# Quality Assurance Plan of the Doctoral School of Veterinary Science of the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest

## 1. Doctoral School (DS)

### 1.1. Mission Statement

As a higher education institution integrated into the University of Veterinary Medicine, Univet DS uses all of its available means to maintain and further improve the internationally acclaimed quality of Hungary's over 200-year-old veterinary science. Our institution aims to provide an opportunity for the best of the fully dedicated young graduates to launch their scientific career.

Following Univet Budapest's historical traditions, **the DS' mission is to train the future generations of instructors and researchers who excel both domestically and internationally and are able to meet the challenges of sustainable agriculture, safe food production, the cultivation of veterinary and related sciences as well as the requirements of a knowledge-based society and modern environment protection.**

### 1.2. Quality policy

The leadership of the DS is fully committed to the constant improvement of doctoral training programmes.

In close cooperation with Univet Budapest, our institution creates, sustains and develops the conditions to

- ensure law abidance and professionalism,
- consider the professional norms of Hungarian and foreign doctoral schools involved in related sciences and disciplines, and
- allow for circumspect, accurate and timely work activities that satisfy all stakeholders (students, doctoral students, teachers, external partner organizations, state and scientific organizations as well as the accrediting institution).

## 2. Objectives related to quality of operation

- Operate and perform tasks in full compliance with the relevant regulations, including the University's by-laws, with special regard to the rules laid out in the DHP.
- Operate in compliance with the Doctoral School's Rules of Operation and Procedure (hereinafter: DIR).
- Monitor and constantly improve the implementation of accreditation requirements and quality evaluation aspects.
- Gain and retain the trust and satisfaction of PhD students and all partners involved in the operation of the DS.
- Assist doctoral students in their integration into the international and Hungarian scientific life. As part of the above, host foreign students for partial or full study periods.
- Operate an enrolment system that promotes the enrolment of applicants who are likely to become scientific researchers, university lecturers or leading figures in the professional and scientific community.

### 3. The means to achieve the quality-related objectives

In order to achieve the above objectives, the DS creates and operates an internal quality assurance system. The above system is always managed and controlled by the head of the DS. The DS' internal quality assurance system contains the following key activities:

- Regularly monitor the legal regulations regarding the functioning and the operational quality of the DS and the implementation of such regulations; conduct internal policies that follow the changes of the regulatory environment.
- Regularly monitor and control DIR-compliant operation, review and update the relevant forms and informative documents as needed.
- Develop and apply an enrolment procedure to enrol applicants <sup>[1]</sup> meeting the quality objectives
- Set clear and unambiguous expectations concerning the training programme and the doctoral degree procedure, with special regard to ensuring a continuous and time-proportionately progressing study and research activity; a timely detection of non-compliance; and publication of research results.
- Thesis Supervisors are required to evaluate their students' academic progress at the end of each semester. They must issue a statement about the potential non-compliance of the doctoral students' work<sup>[2]</sup>.
- Publication compliance is a precondition for launching the doctoral degree procedure.<sup>[3]</sup>
- The DS' website is designed to provide high-quality and efficient communication, general information as well as constant contact between students / thesis supervisors and the DS Secretariat. The above communication relies heavily on using efficiently-designed forms/application forms which also serve as documented evidence in order to minimize disputes as well as to detect and correct errors in time.
- Student satisfaction is assessed via regular questionnaires which the Doctoral School Council evaluates and takes measures accordingly.
- The DS head regularly visits the training facilities. The purpose of these personal visits is to make sure that the training/research conditions are provided, thus promoting operational compliance.
- Quality assurance is also supported by the DS' work orders.

### 4. Documentation

Document management and archiving form an integral part of the systematic application of the DS' quality assurance principles. Electronic or printed documents generated under the DS' operation are considered as quality-assurance documents. The list of the above documents includes the following key elements:

- This document with the mission statement and the quality policy; the self-evaluation,
- The DIR,
- Type **D** information forms available at and downloadable from the DS website,
- Type **F** forms available at and downloadable from the DS website,
- The civil register,
- The results of the accreditation procedures,
- The procedural work orders below,
  - The enrolment process
  - Issuance of the pre-degree certificate (absolutorium)
  - The preliminary debate (at the workplace),

- The requirements for submitting a dissertation
- The comprehensive exam and its rules
- The public debate and procedure of the dissertation
- Archiving order

□ „**Objective and fair evaluation** is ensured by the enrolment procedure as follows:

1. Students participating in the foreign language programme do not need to take an entrance exam. Enrolment requires a preliminary agreement with the prospective Thesis Supervisor.
2. The necessary documents are collected by the applicant's Thesis Supervisor.
3. Based on the collected documents and their own judgement, Thesis Supervisors issue a statement whether the applicant is suitable for enrolment into the PhD programme.

Thesis Supervisors may award a maximum of 30 points as follows:

	<b>criteria</b>		<b>subcriteria</b>	<b>points available</b>	<b>required minimum</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	MS Word, MS Excel skills			10	6	60
2.	Research plan (average score of two reviewers)	1. 1	Professional validity	25	18	72
		1. 2	Methodological compliance	4	2	50
		1. 3	Professional / material / financial conditions of feasibility	4	2	50
		1. 4	Thesis Supervisor's evaluation based on earlier work as TS	2	1	50
			<i>Total:</i>		<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>
3.	On audition	2. 1	Applicant's proficiency in the area	30	22	73
		2. 2	Academic examination and subjective impression	5	3	60
			<i>Total:</i>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>71</b>
			<b>Total:</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>68</b>

4.			After graduation,				
			Within 3 years	Beyond 3 years			
		4.1	SSA activity (faculty conference 3, NSSA 4)	3 – 4	0		
		4.2	diploma >4.51	3	0		
		4.3	(State-recognized) Advanced Level English Certificate	3	3		
<b>“Bonus” points:<sup>2</sup></b>		4.4.	publication performance <sup>3</sup>	IF = r	First author	0	2 (max. 4)
					Not first author	0	1 (max. 2)
				IF > 0.5	First author	0	3 (max. 6)
				Not first author	0	2 (max. 4)	
		Maximum number of bonus points that can be validated:			10		

<sup>1</sup>: effective as of 26.11.2015

<sup>2</sup>: bonus points can be awarded to those who achieved at least 68% (54 out of 80 points) in Criteria 1-3.

A maximum of 20 bonus points can be awarded

<sup>3</sup>: bonus points can be awarded if the applicant can present the journal’s peer-reviewed, impact factored copy and the release’s printed or electronic version and/or if the certificate of approval for publication is available.

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At the end of each semester (by 31 January and July) Thesis Supervisors **evaluate** the performance of **doctoral students**, as laid out in the online Thesis Supervisor’s Report (TSR) programme. The report shall contain the TS’ statements on

- a) The student’s studies conducted under the doctoral programme,
- b) The completion of research tasks and/or the reasons for the lack thereof, the recommended and/or implemented corrective measures, along with the results thereof;
- c) The student’s performance as an instructor.
- d) The TS shall also give a summarized evaluation of the candidate’s activity, including the total number of credits earned during the particular semester and throughout the programme.

“In addition, the TS, the co-TS and the members of the thesis committee analyze and evaluate the doctoral student’s academic progress and research activity at least twice: **at the end of the 4th and the 6th semester**. The above reports are publicly accessible at least at the level of the given organizational unit / research facility. The purpose of these reports is to verify whether doctoral students completed their academic tasks and the time-proportionate share of their

research requirements, as well as to provide further recommendations for students to continue their work.” The dissertation part of the comprehensive exam is constructed with the above aspects in mind.

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Applicants for degree procedures must also meet the discipline-specific professional/scientific requirements, which involve the following mandatory publications serving as the basis for the dissertation:

At least **two** English scientific releases (one with first author credits) published or approved for publication by a referenced journal with an impact factor of <sup>3</sup>0.3;

To promote the creative use of the Hungarian professional language and to inform the local professional community, publication of at least **one** scientific article in Hungarian journal(s), which may be a brief republication of the content of the above English releases or a summary article written on the subject matter of the dissertation. The outlet recommended for such releases is the Hungarian Veterinary Journal.

For the student’s continued employment as assistant lecturer, the accumulated impact factor of the articles forming the basis of the dissertation must reach the level indicated by the Higher Education Employment System (IF 1.0 at clinical and social science departments; IF 2.0 /4 years at other organizational units) and only articles published in the Hungarian Scientific Works Repository Q1-Q4 journals are accepted.